16: Hanks & Hanks E,P-4,5 (1938-1941) 1950
NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Northern Blackfoot
Blackfoot Reserve

of the herds and consequently the returns from cattle have stood consistently lower. Only in terms of the number of horses do the Bloods exceed the Blackfoot, and it is likely that these are in quality more like the Blackfoot range horses than their sturdier work animals. We infer that the resources of the Blackfoot are no greater than those of the Blood but that the trust fund has enabled the Blackfoot to develop what they have.

In many kinds of property the Blackfoot also exceed the Bloods. Despite a larger population, the Bloods have only 95 houses on the reserve as compared with 166 on the Blackfoot reserve. In actual numbers, the Bloods own more tools, wagons, and implements than the Blackfoot, but on a per capita basis the Blackfoot exceed. Judging by personal observation, we would say that the Blackfoot houses have on the average more furniture and that their clothing is of a better quality than the Bloods.

In other respects the Blackfoot are at least the equal of other reserves. All Indian education comes through mission schools or day-schools, and though its adequacy may be questioned, it seems to be fairly uniform from reserve to reserve within a province. In health the Blackfoot are also as well off. The trust fund supports a first-class hospital, whereas medical care is available to most other reserves through missions. Drinking, gambling, and prostitution are at a minimum on the Blackfoot reserve, and we judge this to be true of other reserves as well because of the uniform policing system of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

From the point of view of the administrator the needs of the Blackfoot reserve are satisfied equally well, if not better, than on most other reserves. They are one of the wealthiest groups of Indians in Canada, and little could be gained for them in Ottawa by appealing for more on the basis of these recognized needs.

Indian needs as expressed by the Blackfoot. What are the needs of the Indians as expressed by themselves, and how well are they satisfied by the economy? We may distinguish two types of Indians on the basis of needs: (*a*) Those whose needs concern mainly the satisfaction of the demands of food, good shelter, respectable clothing, and transportation; (*b*) those who, despite having these needs fairly well satisfied, still strive for things over and above these. Let us consider the two types, bearing in mind that they are arbitrary and for illustrative purposes only.[1]

[1]Cf. pp. 80-82.

36: Dempsey . H-4,5 (1952) 1956 NF6 Blackfoot NF6
Blood

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548 At the Horns' sponsored dance at Christmas, 1952, it was noticed that four women chose to dance together as two couples within the recognized circle but in the opposite direction to the general group. Upon inquiry, it was learned that these women were *mat-sah-keets*, or prostitutes. Although their type of dancing had occurred at other gatherings in the past, informants were not sure if it was a Blood custom, or merely the painted ladies' method of flouting accepted Blood traditions.

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[769] A modern innovation in the Owl Dance occurs at the annual summer Sun Dance ceremonies. On this religious occasion, Owl Dances are held almost every afternoon and evening within an enclosed circle. It has become the custom to turn some of the dances into dedication ceremonies for prominent members of the reserve who have died during the past year.

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431 A son or close relative of the deceased stands before the crowd with a large framed picture of the honored person, while the announcer calls for donations to his memory. The donations, ranging from one to twenty dollars, are given to the announcer, together with information as to which visitor is to receive them.

The money, usually in one dollar bills, is pinned to the edge of the picture frame, until the photograph of the honored Blood is wreathed in money. When the collection has been completed, the Owl Dance begins with the holder of the picture dancing or walking at the head of the line.

When the dance has ended, the announcer removes the money and calls out the name of the visitor to receive it. At the Sun Dance of 1952, for example, more than forty dollars were given to Joe Crowfoot, grandson of the former head chief of the Blackfoot, within a few minutes. Most of this amount was made up of one and five dollar donations from individual Bloods.

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178 Throughout their ceremonies, the Bloods are continually adapting their old beliefs and customs to the modern way of life, and the Owl Dance is typical of a ceremony which will likely withstand the onslaught of modern music and dancing. It stands as a prime example of the new and the old in the gradual assimilation of the plains Indian into modern society.

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